

Ellis, Alex

From: Ellis, Alex
Sent: Wednesday, February 2, 2022 4:37 PM
To: letters@economist.com
Subject: Response letter from the Government of Bangladesh

Greetings,

Please consider the below response letter from Harun Al Rashid, Director General (Public Diplomacy) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh.

Thank you,
Alex

The Economist's January 29 [article](#) on Bangladesh reads more like an attack than journalism. It echoes falsehoods regularly fed into social media by self-interested groups that have opposed the policies that have led to a secular and prosperous Bangladesh.

Where is verification for the salacious assertions in the piece? They include sweeping allegations of beatings and even rapes by government officials. Graft is depicted as endemic. So-called disappearances are even given a number. All of these are unfounded and cannot be proven because they are untrue.

The Economist's tendency to repeat unverified and speculative stories on Bangladesh deprives its readers of the successes that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has achieved for the 170 million people of Bangladesh in just over a decade. Bangladesh has leapfrogged to Asia's highest growth economy in the IMF's World Economic Outlook, is consistently ranked on top in World Economic Forum's South Asian Gender Parity Index, and is the Global Terrorism Index's most successful country in South Asia in countering terrorism.

A key driver behind such successes has been the government's zero tolerance policy toward terrorism, extremism and radical organizations. Our law enforcement agencies have also helped maintain stability across our borders and the region, including ensuring safety and security to the Rohingyas.

The article's toxic language and offensive narratives ignore the proud history of women's rights in our Muslim-majority country. It also insults the many strides made by our girls and women breaking stereotypes and glass ceilings in every sphere. Bangladesh is a country where women have historically been on the frontlines of national movements and where more girls than boys attend educational institutions. The Economist appears to misunderstand the resilience of Bangladesh and that it has overcome the odds to stand tall as a thriving nation after just 50 years.

Sincerely,

Mr. Harun Al Rashid

Director General (Public Diplomacy)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Bangladesh

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